CHICAGO TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO TI-99/4A USERS GROUP

ENTER THE PROGRAMMING CONTEST

FEB. 29, 1988

EDITOR: Carole Goldstein

THE MARCH MEETING. . . .

will be held on Saturday MARCH 5, 1987 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the IRONWOOD ROOM at Triton College. Hope to see you all there.

IN THIS ISSUE...

THE DISASSEMBLY	Dave Wakely	Page 3
FROM THE WELCOME MATT	Matt Mullen	Page 6
LETTERS		Page 7
LIBRARY SHELF	Bob Demeter	Page 9
SOFTWARE REVIEW	Paul Farber	Page 10
FLOATING FORTH	Rich Blandin	Page 11
GENEVE SUPPORT COLUMN	Don Jones	Page 13
NOTES ON A CONVERSATION WITH JR	Carole Goldstein	Page 18
FROM THE OTHER ORPHANAGES	Nick I	Page 19
FULL DUPLEX	John Behnke	Page 24
TRADING TImes		Page 30
REMarks	Carole Goldstein	Page 32

COVER BY BUZZ KRANTZ

Contributing artists: Buzz Krantz, Dan Gronowski, Danny Goldstein and Anne Dhein

Thanks to Dennis Hathaway for his proofreading expertise.

BULLETINS:

UG HOT LINE NUMBER IS (312)657-1093.

MEETING DATES FOR THE COMING YEAR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

MARCH 5, IRONWOOD ROOM MAY 7

APRIL 2, FIRESIDE LOUNGE

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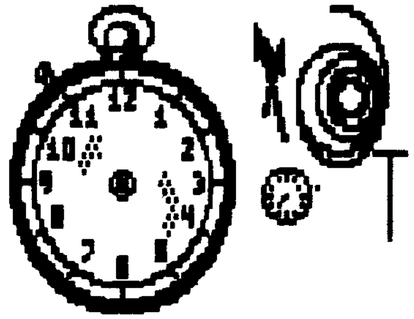

THE DISASSEMBLY

Dave Wakely

The Last Meeting; Programming contest; Rumors; 6th anniversary; Other THings:

PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS: I suppose everyone knew there was a meeting on Saturday, 2/6/88, but perhaps some didn't because the newsletters had some difficulty finding their way into the U.S. Mail in time. I am told that this was caused by the labels also not finding their way onto the completed newsletters after passing through several hands. What this indicates is that the group is dependent on our voluntary distribution system, which for some time now has depended on Grant Schmalgemeier getting this done. As I have noted earlier, Grant has had some health problems recently which have caused him to have to cut back on time devoted to the group. Eventually we will get it together, as we usually do, but until then, accept our apologies for the delay in the last newsletter getting to you. If it is any consolation, as of this writing (2/15) I still haven't received mine.

Once we got to the meeting, we learned of other problems we are having. For example, those of you who have called the group hotline number for information ((312)657-1093) may not know that at least some messages have not gotten through. The machine has apparently developed the nasty habit of scrambling/losing messages. We are also working on this, but if you had some specific information or a request for us which you relayed by way of the hotline, I suggest you try it again to be sure we got it.

Lastly, and as reported here last month, there is increasing evidence that there is some problem with older modems sold through D.A.K. For one thing, they apparently don't want to connect with most bulletin boards which normally operate at 2400 baud and which "step down" to 1200 to connect with them. As a fairly good test of this, some BBS Sysops have changed modems and software and still have users who report that problem. I have been told that DAK likes to pretend this problem doesn't really exist, and that those users are finding that about one time in six or seven they can get through. No one seems to have a solution for this at present, but if we hear anything we will pass it along.

If you didn't come to the February meeting what you missed was a very thorough demonstration of PR Base by Oscar Bretana. He used some data from an actual job he accomplished with it to demonstrate a large number of its functions. Recall that before they left the market, TI never released an "offical" database in the sense that TI Writer was the official word processor and Microsoft Multiplan the official spreadsheet. PR Base seems to get this vote from many, but also see the comparative review of data bases which appeared a few months ago in MICROpendium.

Group member Orlan Degris then brought up a suggestion about how the group

and our resources can support Fairware authors. He suggested that the group add $1.00 to the cost of every program sold by the library, the funds thus generated to be sent to Fairware authors whose programs are in our library. While this is admirably well intentioned, it was pointed out in the discussion which followed that this could lead to no end of problems. For example, how would such funds be allocated? In proportion to the number of copies of each Fairware program sold? To every Fairware author? When we sorted out the discussion, what was decided was that the group would pay the requested Fairware amount (up to a reasonable total) for any Fairware program which we demonstrate at a meeting. In addition, occasionally labels will be available to those in the audience who anticipate that they will be purchasing and using the program. There was some question about just who would assume responsibility for generating such labels, but perhaps something can be worked out which will show the membership that the group officially supports Fairware and encourages members to pay for what they use.

Hank Ellermann conducted his second session as President as competently as he did the first, and once again moderated a question and answer session to conclude the formal part of the program. Following this, a number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) met, on topics ranging from the Myarc 9640 to Business. Al Stump announced that a Hardware SIG will probably get started next month, and he intends to start with some fairly simple projects.

THEY LAUGHED WHEN I SAT DOWN AT THE KEYBOARD: Yes, it is time for you to get serious about programming. The contest is on. So far, the very next entry received by the group will become the front-runner to win $300. This is because the number of entries so far is zero. See last month's column for the rules and details, but note that the deadline for entries is the end of the March meeting, either in person or by mail to the group mailbox, so get working. I have this plan whereby if no one enters I get all the prize money. All I need is a way to sneak this idea past the Executive Board.

THE RUMOR THAT REFUSES TO DIE!: Next to using and programming their TI computers, the favorite activity of group members appears to be telling each other the latest rumor about who is coming out with what new hardware that will do what amazing things. And come to think of it, why should I be left out of this fun? I thought I was only kidding with my list of predictions last month, but maybe there is something to this stuff after all. For example, some people apparently cannot believe that Texas Instruments would just abandon us and never look back. This is much like the orphan who is convinced that any day now his real parents will come by the orphanage to pick him up, explaining that the whole thing was because they temporarily ran a little short of cash, but that now everything is fine and we will all be one big happy family again. Or something like that.

So anyway, the current one says: TI is coming out with a new computer based on the 99XXX chip (the exact number varies depending on who is telling it). This machine will run both IBM and all 99/4A software (Software emulation? Co-processor board? Voodoo?) For a price of $500 (one source) or maybe $850 (another source). One version of the rumor had it that TI has threatened to fire any employee who spills the beans on the development of this machine, which is why no one "officially" knows anything about it, but there are these "real reliable" (wink, wink) sources at TI who swear that the machine will be announced in April via

national advertising, with distribution for late summer. Except that one version of this rumor actually says (nudge, nudge) that if word somehow gets out about this that TI may not release the machine at all, apparently meaning that it is willing to throw away millions of dollars in development money just because some lousy TI columnist had to blab in his group newsletter and ruin it for everyone, so THERE!!

Sigh. I don't know why we do this to ourselves. I guess having what we have left of the original TI, as well as the new (ha!) Geneve 9640 just isn't enough for us. Maybe we don't really want new and better computers, just new and better rumors: "Have you heard the latest news? (Translation: I have a new rumor about TI compatible computers); "I hear that new machine will run at 20 MHz" (Translation: This rumor is spreading real fast); "It has true multitasking" (There are several versions of this rumor going around); "The ROM has already been fully debugged" (I have reliable sources for this rumor); "and I hear there is more to come from them in the future" (If you don't believe this rumor, I have another one all ready to go). Etc. Of course, some spoilsport has pointed out that it is already known that TI is supposedly coming out with a minicomputer business machine in the $30,000 price range, and that some people are apparently misinterpreting this. On the other hand, $30,000 is just about what you have spent on computers so far, isn't it? In any event, more news and/or lunacy, as it gets revealed. What fun!

DULL FACTS: It is not a rumor that this issue marks the 6th anniversary of the Chicago TI-99/4A User's Group newsletter. I'm pretty sure this is true since I was there. In celebration, your newsletter trivia questions of the month are: 1) How many newsletter editors have there been? 2) Who were they? 3) Which was the shortest issue ever produced? 4) When did the newsletter go to its current size (physical dimensions)? 5) What size was it originally? 6) Extra credit question) Who, besides an editor, is the longest running contributor to the newsletter? Answers next month.

SubrouTInes: Due to circumstances beyond my control (Income tax preparation; further renovations here at Chaos Manor Jr.; dental work, etc.) the Spadventures are temporarily "up in the air". They will return next month, I think...

From The Welcome Matt: Matt Mullen

(February of 1988)

This last month we only took in $75.00 in membership dues. There were more people showing up with the certificates from the Faire. How many of you folks still have one of those pieces of paper stuck on the bulletin board or "in that stack of papers" by the computer?

Oh yes, I hope this clarifies something... you pay $15.00 if you renew your membership before January 1st. From that point the dues are $18.00. If you are a new member the cost is a flat $21.00 ($24.00 outside the continental U.S.). By the way, have YOU renewed???

Here is something curious... I mentioned to several people that the turn-out was pretty good considering the temperture. There weren't very many empty seats. (In fact, the membership table only had one chair for 3 people.) The funny thing about the whole situation was that only 93 people signed in again.
If you happen to forget your number, at least put your name down and a question mark. We can find you in the files. I use to forget mine, (I couldn't remember if it was 663 or 633.) I think I'll have a sheet up at the table that has a big question mark on it. Yes, that's what we'll do. Sheets will say:
0 -200, 210-400, 400+, and one that says ???. Maybe this way we can get an accurate count. Oh yes, there is also a sheet for visitors. Please sign in on one of the 5 sheets!

One more thing... Your membership cards SHOULD be in this edition. I'm in the same boat, folks... I renewed during the Faire and (at the time of writing this report) I still don't have my card either....

Matt Mullen
Membership Chairman

P.S. A BIG thanks to Ken and Bobbi on the "front lines" and to Grant and Camelle behind the scenes. Also, Irv, The Shanafields, Tom, Carol and Alan... KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!!

LETTERS

THE APPLE, THE TI, THE CHICAGO USERS GROUP AND THE GENEVE

AN OWNER'S PERSPECTIVE

BY Dick Hill

I stood in the middle of the computer store looking at the array of machines. Being "between jobs" I was looking for an Epson Letter Quality Printer to use with my letters and resumes. As I talked with the salesman, he quickly shifted the conversation toward his new line of Apple computers; particularly after hearing that I owned a Geneve ("Never heard of it,"said the young kid).

He worked diligently on swithcing my thinking to his Apple machines. "The Apple is 'thought free'," said the anxious seller. And he proceeded to show me the use of the mouse and how everything can be done at the touch of a button while pointing to a place on the screen.

Of course, what he didn't realize was that his "sales pitch" was exactly what I was not interested in. Everyone looking for a "thought free" machine has probably left the TI community and today, I am sure, owns an Apple or its equivelant.

My alternatives in originally buying the Geneve were to invest "x dollars" into expanding my TI system i.e. the Geneve, a monitor, two disk drives and a printer; or, start with a new system, such as the Apple. When looking at the "bang for the buck" issue, the obvious choice was to go with the Geneve and some peripherals. The total capability I could get for a fixed investment, far exceeded what I would have if I put the same dollars into a new system. In terms of memory space, speed, monitor technology and printer quality, I would have greater capabilities by continuing to build on to my TI related equipment.

Beyond the hardware considerations, were the extensive software programs I owned -- both TI and third party and the files and disks I had up and running. No, there was no question about what to do with my fixed dollars; and I now own a 9640.

More importantly, "hassle free use" was not my goal. By encountering problems (hardware and software compatibility and operational problems) and working through the problems to a solution, I continue to be stiumuated and learn challenging things about computers, computer languages and hardware configurations. The TI community is for the hardy, the interested, the curious; it is not for the "hassle free mind."

The "cottage industry" concept, with entrepreneurial people developing third party products and creative programming on a shoestring is exciting. Supporting these people, and making their efforts worthwhile becomes an obligation, to me, of TI system supporters. And the interest that most of these people have in making their hardware and software work on your system is inspiring. The Hoddies, the Dhiens, the Bobbits of this world, will spend hours with you on the phone or by mail working through issues until their materials are successful! There

is a personal investment and individual pride in getting their applications to function.

So I am disturbed when I continue to read the bad mouthing of the 9640 in the Chicago TImes. I wouldn't know Lou Phillips, Carole Goldstein, or Peter Hoddie, if they walked in my back door. But, I certainly can follow their ongoing controversies in the monthly issues of the TImes.

Personally, I salute Lou Phillips. The 9640 is a high risk idea with no precedent, and with the conviction of his personal investment. The Geneve is bound to have problems. Myarc is not an IBM or an Apple organization. It doesn't have the funding or the personnel to produce error free products at first blush; particularly considering the enormity of the challenge -- an attempt to launch a product that is better than many features of "big blue" and Apple.

Why is the TImes attitude not one of support? Why aren't problems discovered and pointed out to Lou Phillips for correction? Rather, there is an attitude in the TImes of downgrading Myarc, printing strong negative statements about the Company and even publishing an article comprised entirely of negative Myarc quotes.

What counts is Lou Phillips' committment to improving the system. Personally, I have found his dedication to getting everything working impecable. By God, we all better hope Lou is successful and makes some good profits! And those profits have got to be our funds! Without Myarc what does the TI community have; a fading product whose keyboard, speed, memory space and features are becoming obsolete. The technological development represented by the Geneve is the only complete system alternative to turning into the "buggy whip of 1988." The 9640 is new blood, a renewed approach, and a continued hope for technological advancement. What other computer community has had this opportunity? None to my knowledge!

So more power to you Myarc. For all our sakes: "May you live long and prosper." And Chicago TImes whiners and complainers (Carole Goldstein, Bob Fowler etc.), please, try your hand at building a total system upgrade or go look at the Apple.

For next issue of CHICAGO TImes News Letter.

HARDWARE NOTE

If you have a console replacemant power supply from Radio Shack, and it does not have a pilot light, and you would like to have a light, then this note is for you. The light is an L E D . The Radio Shack stock # 276-041 that comes 2 in a BLISTER PACK for 69 cents is the exact component.

To install: The 2 mounting holes are obvious, and if you follow the trace from one of these holes toward the middle of the Ckt. board to where it terminates at an empty hole, and if you look about 1/2 inch further along the same line you will see another empty hole. On boards that have the L E D installed there is a (300 OHM resistor) bridging these 2 holes, Therefore if you desire a pilot light you can have one.

Also note that an L E D is polarized and if you install it backward the first time. Flip it.

Jim. * Member # 137 *

library shelf

— Bob Demeter —

This will be a very short article for this month. For some reason, the time is slipping by very fast this month. I know I owe everyone a few reviews. But I waited 'till the last minute again. the last minute again. If I may, I will talk to about 1 item this month. The reviews will conme next month

I would like to set up a small contest. Let me rephrase that. It's not really a contest. But, it is... Here is what I want to do: I would like all the readers of this newsletter to send me some information. I want to compile a list of your favorite programs. Tell me your favorite Disk Manager, Spreadsheet, Word Processor, Archiver, Game, Unility, etc. Think of 5 or 10 of your favorite programs under different catagories. List out the catagories and write the program names. Then send your list to me at the this address. Bob Demeter, 2139 Lake Ave., Whiting, Ind. 46394 or P.O. Box 454, Whiting, Ind. 46394.

This will be the Favorite Program Contest. Once the list is compiled, I will make a Favorite Program Pak. This Pak will be made up of PD and Fairware programs. The Pak will be placed in the library and sold at a discounted value.

Now for the contest part. The submissions can be made from now until May 10th. In my May article, I will announce what the disk will contain. Paks will be available at the June meeting. Anytime after the May newsletter comes out, orders will be filled. Once the Pak is made, I will compile a list of submissions. I will see who submitted the list that matches the Pak. That person will receive a Favorite Program Pak free. Or a disk of his choice from the library. In case of ties, a random drawing will take place at the June meeting.

Sit down today and make up your list. Don't forget, the deadline is midnight May 10th, 1988. No purchase nexessary. Get those cards and letters coming in. Catch ya next month....

Bob

PSF software reviews

PAUL FARRER

February 1988-Bigger, Smaller, Wider, Higher.....Well, there you are, sitting pretty with your copy of TI Artist, your 25 disks of Instances, and the 150 different fonts, but you're stuck. You have that digitized photo of Donna Rice you want to print out for your wall, but its too small. On top of that the font that you needed to use for the presentation to your new client is either too big, or too small. Have no fear, we've got two products for you that'll blow your socks off (Come to think of it, the last time my socks got blown off was when I tried arc welding during the fall floods.).

The first of these programs is the GRAPHICS EXPANDER by J. Peter Hoddie. Peter has teamed up with Barry Traver to form Genial Computerware (P.O. Box 183, Grafton, MA 01519) and offer this (and other) programs for your treat. This treat will cost you $10.00, a cheap price for a good program. Graphics Expander will load into your machine with E/A Option 5, TI Writer Option 3, or the Funnelweb loader, although it also comes with an Extended Basic loader. Once you load the program you'll be presented with a short menu giving you the options for (1)Fonts, (2)Instances, (3)Catalog Disk, (4)Delete file, and (5)Quit.

Selecting Fonts will allow you to work on either TI Artist or CSGD fonts and is a convienent way to convert from one program to another. But, if thats all that the GRAPHICS EXPANDER did I wouldn't be wasting your time talking about it here. What happens after you specify a font is that the letter A (or another letter if the A doesn't exist in the font you are working on) will appear along with a menu of options for modifying the font with way you wish. Selecting either H (for horizontal) or W (for width) will allow you to adjust the size of the font up to a factor of 9 (if you've started with a small font) or let you distort the font so its tall and thin or short and fat. Wait, What was that? You need to turn the font upside down so you can create that reflection, then you want to invert the pixels so that your mirror image is also a color reversal as well, well GRAPHICS EXPANDER will do that. How about reversing the characters so you have a mirror image, or rotating the font so you can print down the side of the page, or make banners, GRAPHICS EXPANDER will do that also. After you make your selection and press ENTER, the conversion will start and you will br prompted for a filename to save to. Remember to use the extensions of _F or /CH for your load and save font names otherwise you'll get an error message.

Choosing Instances as your selection will give you the same options as you had for fonts and let you adjust them to your liking the same way you did with the font sets. The other main menu options will let you catalog any disk INCLUDING a hard disk with full path names. Delete file will delete a file from your disk as long as its not a write protected file, and QUIT will, of course, quit the program. There is one other program on the GRAPHICS EXPANDER disk called BIGTYPE. BIGTYPE will let you use any size font and to use that font to type on a TI Artist or GRAPHX picture and then to save that picture to disk. All in all a worthwhile program for you to explore.

The other program of almost the same ilk (by the way, Just what is an ILK?) is ARTIST ENLARGER, from ASGARD Software (Department RD8, P.O. Box 10306, Rockville, Maryland 20850) for about $8-9.00. Loading from Extended Basic the appearance of a main menu will present you with almost the same options as given by GRAPHICS EXPANDER, that is, Instances, Fonts, Catalog, and Exit. ARTIST ENLARGER will do one thing to a font, or instance, that GRAPHICS EXPANDER will not do, and that is to let you reduce the size of a font or instance. In the reduction of, lets say, a font it will cut the size in half. By this I mean that a font whose characterers are say, 16 pixels by 16 pixels, the program will reduce the size of the character to 8 pixels by 8 pixels. This is a full reduction in size and, of course you can also double the size of a font or instance (i.e. full enlargement). As with the GRAPHICS EXPANDER, ARTIST ENLARGER will let you do the doubling (or halving) in either the horizontal or the vertical direction. Besides the program itself the ARTIST ENLARGER disk comes with a pretty nice collection of instances, etc. for you to play with.

Running both programs I found some pluses and minuses for each. GRAPHICS EXPANDER is somewhat more versatile with the up to a 9:1 horizontal and vertical expansion, mirror image, reversal, and rotation. But the minus in GRAPHICS EXPANDER is ARTIST ENLARGER's plus, and that is the ability of the later program to reduce the size of a font or an instance. On the minus side for the ARTIST ENLARGER is the fact that, when converting an instance (a reduction in size) it had some problems with the clarity of the details and I had to repeat the job. Both of these are minor objections and I like to use bot of these programs. In fact, one of these days soon I hope to use both of these programs to take a nice business-like font and alternately squeeze it and blow it up in order to produce many iszes of the same type font. One disk full of these and I should be able to do some desk top publishing in the manner to which it should be done. Who knows, maybe I could even talk Carol G. into printing my article in some of these redone fonts. You never know!

FLOATING FORTH: Rich Blandin

FLOATING FORTH (No water required!) by Rich Blandin #143

THE TEXT:

FORTH can use the Radix 100 floating point ROM package available in the TI-99/4a console. Let's not go into this numbering system, but just say that you can have the same number accuracy that you have in BASIC. >F puts a floating point number on the stack. Floating point numbers occupy 4 words (8 bytes) each. Then to make "floating forth" easier, the following stack manipulation words are provided. FDUP, FDROP, FOVER and FSWAP operate the same as the similar non-float words. F+, F-, F* and F/ do the arith- metic on the stack. F. will print the top floating point number on the stack. F.R will print the floating point number right justified. FF. and FF.R are two more printing words (See TI FORTH Chapter 7, page 3). I used the format FF.R to get the results I wanted. 9 2 10 FF.R will print a floating point number with 9 numbers, 2 decimal places, 10 place right justified field. F! and F@ are used to store and fetch floating point numbers. VAL is used to convert a string at PAD to a floating point number and store it at FAC (Floating Point Accumulator). FAC is a register in CPU ram. The FORTH word >FAC moves the floating point data from the stack to the FAC. FAC> moves the floating point data from FAC to the stack.

I wanted to use FORTH to do this little arithmetic problem. Find the Net amount when the Gross amount and the Tax rate are known. The formula will be: GROSS AMOUNT / (1 + TAX RATE) = NET AMOUNT. In FORTH: GROSS AMOUNT 1 TAX RATE + / . Put the numbers on the stack, add, then divide. NET AMOUNT is the answer.

CHAR in line four of the 1st SCREEN shown below is a direct copy from SCR 57 of the TI-FORTH disk.
LEN counts the characters that are entered.
ACCEPT is keyboard entry that counts the characters and stores the count at the beginning of the string. Just like basic.
NCHECK checks for characters greater than ASCII 57. Numbers are ASCII 57 or less. So, if letters are entered, we can QUIT the program run, print a message and return to the console.
The rest of the lines have comments to explain what is happening.

THE SCREENS:

```
 0 ( DOTAX Tax on totals by Rich Blandin 1/15/88)
 1 DECIMAL 0 CLOAD DOTAX 45 CLOAD PI 33 CLOAD RANOMIZE
 2 0 VARIABLE TAXRATE 6 ALLOT 0 VARIABLE NETAMT 6 ALLOT HEX
 3 ( Make variable TAXRATE & NETAMT large enuf for floating point)
 4 : CHAR 8 * 800 + >R -2 6 DO PAD I + ! -2 +LOOP PAD R> 8 VMBW ;
 5   FF 0 0 0 5F CHAR DECIMAL ( Change underline character )
 6 : LEN 255 0 DO DUP I + C@ 0= IF I LEAVE THEN LOOP SWAP DROP ;
 7 : ACCEPT OVER 1+ DUP ROT EXPECT LEN SWAP C! ;
 8 : NCHECK PAD COUNT SWAP DROP 1+ 1 DO PAD I + C@ 57 > IF CR
 9  ." DECIMAL ENTRIES ONLY" CR ." Type DOTAX" QUIT THEN LOOP ;
10 : DOTAX CLS
11   0 0 GOTOXY ." ENTER GROSS AMOUNT- $       .00"
12  21 0 GOTOXY
13 PAD 9 ACCEPT NCHECK VAL FAC> ."          " ( Get gross number,
14 check for valid number entry, change to floating point number,
15 move to Stack, clean off rest of line.)                    -->
```

Next screen:

```
 0 ( Continue DOTAX )
 1 CR CR ." ENTER TAX RATE IN %- " PAD 9 ACCEPT NCHECK VAL
 2 FAC> >F 100 F/ FDUP TAXRATE F! ( Get Taxrate, check for valid
 3    number entry, change to floating number, move to stack,
 4    change % to decimal, FDUP for next math, store at TAXRATE)
 5  >F 1 F+ F/ FDUP NETAMT F!  ( Add 1 to stack and divide for
 6                  Net amount, FDUP for print and store at NETAMT)
 7 CR CR ." NET AMOUNT -$" 9 2 10 FF.R ( Print Net amount)
 8 NETAMT F@ TAXRATE F@ F* FDUP     ( Fetch Net amount & Tax rate,
 9                              multiply and FDUP for next math)
10 CR ." TAX....... -$" 9 2 10 FF.R ( Print tax amount)
11 CR ."                 _________"  ( Under line)
12 NETAMT F@ F+                    ( Fetch Net, add to tax on stack)
13 CR ." CHECK TOTAL-$" 9 2 10 FF.R ( Print Total)
14 CR CR ." Another? Type DOTAX" ;  ( Do again?)
15 DOTAX
```

THE RESULT:

```
ENTER GROSS AMOUNT- $999999.99

ENTER TAX RATE IN %- 10

NET AMOUNT -$ 909090.90
TAX....... -$  90909.09

CHECK TOTAL-$ 999999.99

Another? Type DOTAX ok
```


GENEVE SUPPORT ARTICLE

DON JONES

Howdy Doody there, sports fans! Well, here I am again, your old friend Krome Dome Jonz, with my now monthly Geneve 9640 Support Article!

Well, this has been an interesting month for me and Geneve. I only hope that I can keep my article a decent lenght this month, but there is so much to talk about. First, I would like to discuss something of a rather delicate nature; it is the following question:

WHO WILL GET THE BUZZARD???

Now, I'll bet that you sports fans are now wondering why someone would be worried about an ugly, dirty, smelly, gross, humongous, mangey, old bird. Well, sports fans, I just want to tell you that I'm not talking about vultures, at least the avian kind. Rather, I'm talking about a friend of mine, who carries the appellation of, "THE MIGHTY BUZZARD! Yes, I'm speaking of, none other than, Mr. Edward P. Krantz, Jr., alias, "Buzz," a.k.a. Vulture Voice and Buzzard Breath. Now, again, why the above question? In order to answer, a little background is necessary:

Many months ago, my friend, Buzz, gave me a disk. He said that it was a slide show of some of his art work, using TI Artist. He asked me to check it out and let him know what I thought of it. Well, I was pretty busy at the time, as it was then that I was the membership chairman, of our most estimable group. About two weeks later, I finally while cleaning up some miscellaneous disks and files, took the time to view my friend's work. It was a slide show called Buzz Land. As I viewed my friend's work, I quickly became aware that my friend, Buzzard (accent on the second syllable, please), is an artist of quite considerable talent. Not only that, his talent made me re-evaluate the value of my beloved TI-99/4A as he had created things that showed me a potential, which my 4A had, which I had never been aware of. I also immediately realized that I would be hard pressed to find similar, original works on a mere clone. As a result of my revelation, not only was I proud to be able to call this talented person my friend, I also became even more proud to own and use my beloved 4A. This is what one creative person, my friend, The Mighty Buzzard, did for me. At this time, it is clear to me, and to him, that with a talent such as his, he is ready for something more than the 4A can provide. He has finally encountered all of the limitations of that medium, and now, he

needs something more. The important question is, "What machine will he choose?" or, to restate the question, "Who will get the Buzzard?"

Relative to the above question, I really believe that whatever computer he chooses will itself benefit in the following way: Because it is his nature, Buzzard will continue to create works of great beauty which will best show off the grapic capability of his chosen machine. I therefore believe that Buzz's work will become both a demonstration of and a selling point for whatever machine that he chooses. If the various machine makers were smart, they would be trying to give Buzz a machine, for whatever machine he chooses will benefit a thousand fold, because of his creativity. And besides Buzz, there are some other very talented and creative individuals out there for whom the situation is the same. In art and graphics, there is also Danny Gronowski. In the area of programming, there is Jim Derk, Mike ("The Frogman") Maksimik, and many more creators, whose names presently elude me. The more creative people we have on our side, the more that Geneve will benefit.

This month, I am going to get a little hooked on graphics. I guess the reason is the RGB monitor which I recently purchase. After having had the opportunity to work on it, I can clearly say that it has caused me to re-evaluate my machine, even though I have always felt very positive towards it. I might also mention that the editor of this newsletter, Carole Goldstein, has also had to re-evaluate the 9640, after having purchased a RGB analogue monitor. Relative to an analogue RGB monitor, (the Magnavox RGB monitor, in particular) there are a few things that I would like to say:

The first thing that I want to say is that there are no clear instructions available for anyone who wishes to build his/her own monitor cable for the Magnovox 8CM873 Multisync-Multimode RGB monitor. Because of this fact, I am now attempting to write an article on this subject. It will be uploaded to our group's b.b.s., with two other articles, on how to build your own monitor cable. My article will, hopefully, contain a clear diagram (drawn with Myart, and lucid instructions (written with Myword).

My next point is based on a conversation, which I had with Carole Goldstein: We both heartily agree that the purchaser of a Geneve 9640 computer should also invest in an analogue (TTL *digital* just won't work) RGB monitor. To do anything else will be tantamount to taking a step backwards, rather than one forward. Without a RGB monitor, one cannot appreciate the graphic capability of this machine. Also, though you will still be able to easily read 40 columns of print, 80 columns will be very difficult and the source of eye strain. Therefore, if graphics, games, and entertainment are important to you, you will need a RGB monitor from the beginning. If you are primarily interested in word-processing, using a data base, and/or using a spread sheet, a composite monochrome monitor is more than adequate, but the differences between a composite color monitor and a RGB color monitor are too great and dramatic to even attempt to describe. I therefore don't want you to take my word. Instead, find out for yourself. Also, if you already have a Geneve, and are using it only for "serious" work, take the time to download from our board, or purchase from our library, some of the GIF examples which are so abundant.

Also, there is a very nice feature about the Magnavox "multisync" analogue/TTL monitors: they can also be used with mere IBM's and their "clones." Therefore, an investment in one does not limit you or lock you into the Geneve community; you are compatible with many other machines too. Just be sure to ask your salesman about the "multisync" feature before you purchase your monitor.

In case you aren't aware of it GIF is an acronym for Graphic Interchange Format. GIF pictures can be created by any computer, with the proper software. So far, I have seen pictures done on the Atari ST, the IBM, and the Amiga. (Though I have not seen any, I believe that the MacIntosh II is also capable of GIF displays.) These files can be transferred to and from, and used by all of the above mentioned computers, including the

Geneve. This is a good example of software compatibility. If you haven't seen any GIF creations, by all means pick up Paul Charlton's program GIF2, which is necessary to display art works in GIF format, and when you do, please don't forget to give the author his due! One last thing, regarding the RGB analogue monitor: If you haven't read it, be sure to read my friend, Jan Janowski's, article in last month's newsletter. It is entitled, "Why RGB?" The whole article is the result of some very interesting and informative telephone conversations which we had about six weeks ago. You will probably find his article most educational. With this, I shall leave the subject of graphics on the Geneve. At the same time, I shall refer you to Carole Goldstein's monthly column. I think that she too will have something to say on the subject. Also, I tend to think that it may be quite different from what she has been saying in the past.

If you weren't able to be present at our last meeting, you missed a really good one. First, Oscar Bretana gave a demonstration/tutorial on William Warren's data base, PR Base. Also, I was able to send Mr. Warren checks for the $100.00, which I collected, as payments for his fine program. Here is a program that is very nice, and it is compatible with both the 4A and the 9640. I recommend this program very highly, and if you do take it, please don't forget to give the author his due! He is only asking a lousy $10.00 for a very fine program.

Also, after the regular meeting, I chaired my second Geneve S.I.G. (Special Interest Group) meeting. At that time, we had a room full of about 20 very attentive and courteous Geneve owners/users. Quite a bit of information was shared at that time, but the one thing that really made the day for me, and for a lot of other people, was the unexpected and unannounced appearance of Jim Schroeder, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This was a very exciting meeting as Jim happens to be a very innovative programmer for the Geneve 9640 computer. By having his program/file HDROS installed, on your Horizon RAM disk, you can boot your DOS from there. Without it, your Horizon remains "transparent" to your Geneve. Jim is also responsible for a modification of Disk Manager 1000, which allows it to be used by Geneve. He also did a modification of John Johnson's ROS for the Horizon RAM disk, so that it could be used with the 9640. In fact, he even added a running clock and calendar to it! Those of us who use/own Geneve can't help but admiring Jim and being grateful for all that he has done for our machine.

At that last meeting Jim brought a disk that contains some more goodies for Geneve lovers. One is a "shell" of a program called, NOTMYTERM. This is a terminal emulator program, which runs out of DOS, instead of GPL. I call it a mere "shell" of a program as it contains no print spooler, no warning sounds, no text buffers, no disk catalogue functions, etc. It is just a beginning of what will probably be a most impressive program. Jim is asking a mere $10.00 for this shell. If you purchase this "fair ware" program, you will be eligible to receive his forthcoming later versions, with enhancements! He also has a new "fair ware" program which allows you to write your DOS and your HDROS to your Horizon RAM disk, from DOS! Another "fair ware" program of his will allow you to use up to three Horizon RAM disks. In addition to the "fair ware" stuff, Jim threw in a "free ware" file called, MYCOLOR. As its name implies, it allows you change your screen and text colors, in DOS! As Jim left me a copy of these fine programs, they will be in our program library, and I will upload them to our b.b.s. Please support the efforts of this author. Without people like Jim, our machine cannot live!

A revelation, which led to the stark realization of the fact that we are highly dependent upon the good will of our "fair ware" authors brought home a most embarassing point to me. The point was that I had been procrastinating; In fact, I had been procrastinating to the point that I had never paid for even one "fair ware" program. This was a most embarassing relevation to me, a staunch supporter of the "fair ware" concept. As a result, I have in the last six weeks, paid six different "fair ware" authors for programs of theirs, which I have been using. I am now paying them off at the rate of at least one a month. I should be all caught up in the next four months. I here urge all other

Geneve owners to do the same. To refuse to do so is being "penny-wise and dollar-foolish" as we are cutting the throats of our only present source of software for our machine. Just think of where the 4A would be if it hadn't been for the effort of the "fair ware" authors. Please don't kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. A nice letter of appreciation, to those authors who have supported us, our machine, and our community would be very helpful and useful, towards our goal of continued life. At the same time, remember the words of Dorothy Parker, "The three most beautiful words in the English language are, CHECK IS ENCLOSED! "

At our last meeting, our b.b.s. SYSOP, Butch Goldstein asked me if I would like to be an assistant SYSOP on our board. He said that my responsibilities would be the upkeep of the Geneve section. I forthwith gave my assent, as I saw it as an opportunity to further support the Geneve environment. I urge all Geneve owners to keep a watch on the downloads section of the group's board and the personal board that belongs to our president, Mr. Hank Ellermann. I will attempt to keep the most current Geneve programs up on both of these fine boards.

At the last Geneve S.I.G. meeting, I demonstrated Edward Hallett's fine "free ware" program, GPL LOADER. It is really great, and I have it installed on my Horizon RAM disk. If you have a Horizon, and you want to boot it from there, you will need to make the following changes with a sector editor: In the file named, CART, at sectors 01C7 and 01CB, change DSK1 to DSK6. Also, in the file named GPQ, at sectors 0286 and 028A, again change DSK1 to DSK6, in order to boot Johnson's menu file, from your Horizon RAM disk. If you haven't acquired and tried out this fine program, you owe it to yourself to do just that.

If you choose to use Mr. Hallett's fine program, you will find a very nice and useable AUTOEXEC file included within the program. It is important that you use one as there are some commands and parameter settings that can be made only within an AUTOEXEC file. I have taken my own AUTOEXEC file which I printed here, last month, and incorporated into Mr. Hallett's file. I now have the best of both worlds. One word of caution: Be sure that you allocate a sufficient amount of memory to your printer spooler function. If you don't you will have some serious difficulties in trying to print anything out. To be on the safe side, I have my AUTOEXEC file set up to render my 128K of memory space to my print spooler. Since I have done that, I have had no problems with printing anything out in either Myart or Myword.

If you have a Horizon RAM disk, and you want to use it to boot your DOS, you must either have Mr. J. Peter Hoddie's special EPROM or Mr. Jim Schroeder's HDROS file. I use the latter, so I will talk about that. Using his old files, here is what you must do in order to get started. a.) Set your Horizon RAM disk to a CRU of either 1400 or 1600. b.) Turn you system on, and boot the DOS from a floppy drive. c.) Boot in the GPL environment. d.) Load into the GPL the cartridge dump for Myarc's editor/assembler file. e.) Load in the file for Disk Manager 1000. f.) Use option 2 to initialize your RAM disk using the "BOX FORMAT." (Be sure to not verify the initialization.) g.) Install your DOS (SYSTEM/SYS) file, your editor/assembler, your Disk Manager 1000, and your file, HDROS, onto your RAM disk. (This should be disk drive 6 for a CRU of 1400 or disk drive 7 for a CRU of 1600. Also, you will probably want to install your GPL onto your Horizon RAM disk, if there is sufficient space.) h.) Exit the disk manager and return to editor/assembler. i.) Using option 3 of the editor/assembler, load in the program LHDROS. j.) Indicate your CRU address of 1400 for your RAM disk. (If you have named your RAM disk as DSK7, its CRU must then be 1600.) k.) Exit the program, and you will now find that your RAM disk will boot your DOS upon power-up.

All of the above is all well and nice, and it works very well, but there is a much easier method to do the same thing. a.) First get Jim Schroeder's new HDROS/LHDROS files. b.) Set your RAM disk to either a CRU of 1000, 1400, or 1600. (1000 can be used only for boot-up.) c.) Boot your SYSTEM/SYS file. d.) Copy SYSTEM/SYS and HDROS to your

Horizon RAM disk. e.) Type in LHDROS and follow the instructions on the screen. As you can see, it is a lot easier and a lot simplier. The only criticism that I have about the new version is that it only initialized my RAM disk for 720 sectors, when I should have 992 sectors free. (BTW, Jim, how about a file that will initialize my triple sided RAM disk to a proper 992 sectors instead of 1400?) In this case I have to get into GPL and using Disk Manager 1000 I can move all of my files from my Horizon to my built in RAM disk (DSK5), and then I can re-initialize my Horizon to its fully available size (because my chips are stacked three high, I have a "three sided" disk). Once it has been properly initialized, I can then move my files back from the built in RAM disk to my Horizon. Neat??? I think so.

Well, sports fans, I had better get off before I get thrown off the page. I will here enclose my word processor graphic, which I attempted to publish last month. I will use a different techinique and hope that it too doesn't get garbled. Also, will the gentlemen who brought their Geneve and monitor to the meeting please bring them back again. I think that the man with the Geneve was Tom. I will be bringing some other hardware to the meeting to show you, relative to expanding your Geneve system. Until then, adios, amigos!!!

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NOTES ON A CONVERSATION WITH JACK RILEY: Carole Goldstein

On Thursday February 4th in the morning came a very unexpected phone call. I'm not even sure how Jack got my private number but he did. He wanted to know if I had received the updated GPL .99 that he had personally sent me and if it had solved the problems that I was having. He also gave me the opportunity to ask as many questions as I wanted to. We spoke for an hour.

Jack informed me that all the first mailings of software for the Geneve were to be completed by the next day. So if you registered your purchase, you should have recieved a package from Myarc recently.

There are some interesting packages in the works right now that should be appearing soon for the 9640. Jack was most excited about GEME, pronounced jimmy. This is to be a windowing program offering TRUE multi-tasking and a smart print spooler capable of handling multiple RS232 cards with different printers attached. For example you could send the output from one printer to a dot matrix printer and the output from another to a daisy wheel. And the next version of My-Art will support a color printer so you would be able to send the output from that window to the color printer. More information about this program is in last months Micropendium.

I asked about Myarc upgrading their 512K card so that it would be compatible with the Geneve and that does not seem to be a priority although it is very much on their minds. The fact that they have not yet done the modifications is hurting their sales of the card also.

We talked a lot about the upcoming hard and floppy disk controller and I don't quite agree with their pricing on this product. Many hard disks with controllers are available for considerably less than their controller alone and adding the cost of a floppy controller does not bring it up to Myarcs ball park, but their card also has a tape backup controller built in. They have seen the mistakes that TI made when they could not imaagine that a home user would ever need more than 48K and have built more into this card than you will probably need when you first buy it but if you want to add on, the capability will be there. It will control up to 4 floppies ranging from SSSD 5 1/4 to DSHD 3 1/2. It also comes with the cables. Still it does not come with the Hard Drive itself and that adds to the expense. The speed on it is to be faster than those available on the PC's at the present time. The card is done for all practical purposes and about 12 are in beta test use right now. The hold up is the software.

Mike Dodd is working on the MDM5 which will also work with this card. It is the Myarc Disk Manager 5 and it will allow tree type processing of files. New versions of DOS are in the works also which will allow use of hard drives. These versions will appear with an "H" after the version, example V 1.01H. Jack also claimed that MDOS is being developed more in the vein of the OS/2 operating system that MSDOS. (The OS/2 is IBM's newest operating system for its new line of PC 2's.)

I asked about desktop publishing and Jack replied that this and CAD were not a priority. They do not see these as a major need for the majority of their users. They do however see the upcoming release of a data base

that runs under Pascal. Its interesting that Jack said this program would be out as soon as the Pascal Runtime is finished. I had assumed that an entire Pascal system would be included with the Geneve. It is my understanding that runtime involves only what you need of the language to run the program and not the entire system.

A comparison of the price of a full Geneve system to a similar IBM system as they see it, will appear shortly in an upcoming Micropendum issue. They will compare the price of a Genve with all its included software to an IBM system running with a VGA card and all its software. Should be an interesting comparison with a lot of controversy attached.

So, that about wraps up my latest conversation with Jack Riley. Seems like Myarc is starting to take more of an interest in the people that invest their hard earned money in their machines. And, as I told Jack, with the addition of my RGB monitor and some of the new software that I have seen, I am starting to really like my Geneve.

FROM OTHER ORPHANAGES

FROM THE OTHER ORPHANAGES
A few month ago I wrote a Soundoff column for the user group. In that letter I mention that I was taking over the
media. That quote made the user group dump back issue of
other newletters on my doorstep and elected me new editor of the column from other orphanages. After skimming most of the other groups newsletter I found most articles can't be sum up like it was in the past. The NEW FROM OTHER ORPHANGES COLUMNS will be reprints of other user groups articles which I feel user will get the most information out of. This month column 2 articles on RLE GRAPHICS

USING THE IMAGEWISE VIDEO DIGITIZER WITH THE TI99/4A
By STEVE LANGGUTH

For the past year or so, thanks to the authors of a couple "RLE" programs, user of the TI 99/4a have been able
to view and use high resolution pictures created by the users of other brands of computers. It was great being able to take advantage of all picture files that could be found on the various online database and BBS's. But it also made me realize that something was missing in world of the 99/4A.

User of other brand of computers (even the 8 bit antiques like the Commodore 64 and Atari 800) had access to video digitizers, and the TI users did not. Now this might not seems like a very big problem to some users, but to those of us who enjoy working with computer graphics it was. Notice that I said "was". Finally, users of the TI/994A can

digitize images from cameras and VCR's and put those images into a format that can be use by the various bitmap mode drawing program available for our computer. This article explains how that can be done.

The Hardware ----------
In the May and June 1987 issue of Byte Magazine, Steve Ciarcia (Byte's resident hardware genuis) described a video digitizing system that he had developed called the "ImagesWise" system. This system is composed of two parts, a "digitizer/transmitter" and a "receiver/display". Each of these parts are contained on a separate printed circuit board. You can buy each board already assembled or in kit with all the needed components. Or, you can just buy the printed circuit board (with a Eprom containing the control software)nad then buy all the other necessary components yourself. I chose to buy the components myself, and the two parts of the system wound up costing me a total of about $150.00 each.

When the boards arrived in the mail, they came with detailed instruction manuals and parts lists, Inclunding the various parts numbers for several of the larger electronic supply companies. Even though I never attempted a hardware project before, I had little trouble getting everything put together. (I do have a friend next door, who is a 99/4a hardware "genius", so i could afford to be a litte "braver"
than I would have been if I had to attempt a project like this totally by myself!). And once I finally got all the components soldered into the correct holes (dont ask!!), both boards worked great.

The digitizer/transmitter (d/t) board is, as the name implies, the part of the "ImageWise" system that does the digitizing. Unlike some other digitizers made specifically
for other computer systems that take several second to digitize a complete image(and therefore require your "subject not to move or your VCR to be set to "freeze frames"), The ImagesWise d/t board captures a complete image in 1/60th of a second. It accept video signals from a standard TV camera (either BW or color), VCR , laserdisc player, or camcorder, and stores the picture as 244 lines of 256 pixel with 64 colors of grey scales for each pixel. The d/t board then converts the stored video images to RS-232 serial data which can be trasmitted to any computer with a RS-232 port or to the ImageWise receiver/display board

The receiver/display board (r/d) accepts serial data from the d/t board or files downloaded from a computer. It converts this data back on a picture suitable for display on a composite video input monitor. Together the two board allows the users to create a file of digital data that represent a analog video image, use a computer to manipulate this file, and then display the newly "manipulated" image. The July and August 1987 issue of BYTE
magazine both contain articles describing interesting images processing techniques that can be performed on files created this way.

The Software

As I stated earlier, each board comes with a EPROM that controls what the board is doing. But you still need programs for the computer that allows you to accept the data being sent from the d/t board to the RS-232 and to send a dat filefrom your computer to the r/d board. Also, if you want to display digitized images on your computer monitor you need a program that converts the data file into a form that your computer can use. If I was an IBM PC user , this would have been no problem because the boards comes with a disk containg programs for the PC that both "grab" and "show" images. But because my little 99/4a is a "orphan",
i had to write these program myself.

To "grab" a digitized image fom the d/t board, you must simply connect the DB-25 connector to the RS-232 of the computer. The program need to send one byte code to the board to tell what resolution use (the choices are 256x244, 128x122, 64x61), then when the program sends to the board a character >11 (XON), the board "instantly" digitize the picture and begins sending it to the computer. (the baud rate being use is selected by dip switch on the board itself.) If the computer must take a "time out" to write to disk , the program simply sends a character >13 (XOFF) and the board stop sending until it received another "XON". The file created by this program is LARGE. The board sends one byte for each screen pixel. The value of these bytes range from >00 for black to >3F for a pixel that is white. This adds up to a file of 246 sectors for each pixel digitized. Of course, the file contains a lot more "data" than the 99/4a users can use, because even tough our high resolution screen is 256x192 we have only 15 colors to work with and each pixel cannot be colored "independently". Perhaps more of this data will be put to use on the Myarc 9640.

To "show" a digitized image on the r/d board, the process is just reversed. A file is simply read one record at a time and then send to the r/d board via the RS-232. I found that I had to use assembly language to write the "grab" program, but a very simple extended basic worked fine for the "show"
program.

Finally, because I wanted to use my digitized images on my TI/99 4A I wrote a program that will "convert" the information in the files created by the d/t board in to a picture that can be save in TI-ARTIST format. At first I decided to simply "turn on" a pixel if it was above a certain value and leave it "turn off" if it was below the "dividing line". Unfortunately, this simple method really didn't give me as much detail to the picture as i knew was possible. After a lot of experimentation I was able to create an "algorithm" that turns on more pixels in the areas that are supposed to be darker, and less in the lighter areas. The converted picture has much less resolution than the original, but it CAN be saved as a TI-ARTIST picture file (25 sectors), which can then be modified or printed out.

Summary -------
The ImageWise video digitizer system is fairly simple to build, relatively inexpensive, very powerful video digitizer
that CAN be use with the 99/4A. If all your are interested in is a digitizing video from a camera or VCR, all you really need is the digitizer/transmitter board, which can be assembled for about $150-$175 dollars. To use the digitized system on the 99/4A itself you will have to "sacrifice" a lot of the resolution. but because the system sends it data through the a standard RS-232 interface it will continue to be compatible as you "upgrade" your graphics capabilities.

If you have any questions that I haven't answered, just leave them in a message on GEnie, or write to me at:

Steve Langguth
2956 South Barnes,
Springfield MO 65804

Also, If you would be interested in buying the programs I wrote to use the ImageWise systemand the 99/4A, I will glading sell them to you for $10--$11, if a have to supply the disk (hey I' got to pay for this baby somehow !!!!!).

The above article was taken from the Will County user group original print or the article is unknown.

THE ALL-NEW, SUPER-DUPER, HANDY-DANDY, 98 CENT, DO-IT-YOURSELF, WAXPAPER

R. L. E. DIGITIZER!

BY: RAY KAZMER, SFV 99ers

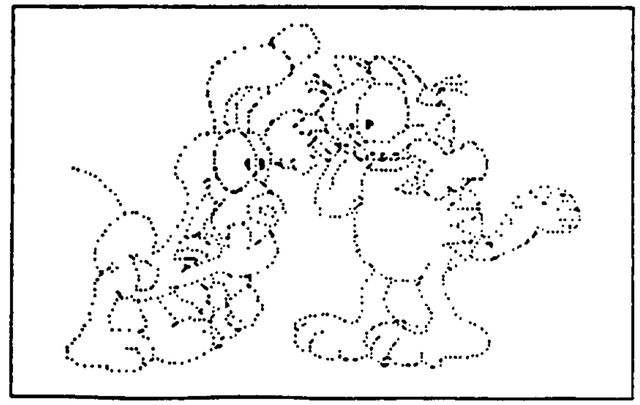
When I saw my first R.L.E., I thought, "GOLLLLL-LEEEE! I'd SHORE like to draw ME a pit-chur like THAT!!" Then I found out that it takes somethin called a "digitizer" to make an R.L.E. and THOSE things could cost a LOT more than my '66 Chevy (fer-shirrrrr!) Since my TI-ARTISTic talents were FAR from perfect, I decided I'd try to make a CHEAP digitizer, one which required very little talent to use, but would yield a fairly good R.L.E.

"Tracing" a picture, then sticking the paper to my TV screen, so I could move TI-ARTIST's cursor under it (drawing as I went) seemed a good idea, but regular tissue paper wouldn't let me see my cursor CLEARLY enough! I tried "plastic wrap," which certainly DID allow me to see the cursor but wouldn't hold ANY kind of ink! Besides, one touch and it was all SMUDGE, SMUDGE, SMUDGE! And you know how it LOVES to "cling to itself!" Mur-der!

While shopping, I spotted a roll of WAXPAPER (98 cents for 100 feet) AND a (9"X12") cardboard folder (with "pockets" inside) used by school kids. Though the folder was way too big for my TV screen, the drawings of ODIE and GARFIELD on the cover (my favorites!) seemed to be just about right!

At home, I taped a hunk of waxpaper onto the folder, then QUICKLY traced over every line, "etching" the image into the waxpaper with a mechanical pencil (with the lead retracted.) THAT WAS A MISTAKE!!! If you decide to try my "digitizer" yourself, trace with GREAT CARE! Make your tracing as ACCURATE as possible! Care NOW, will save you LOADS of "correcting time" later, when you are completing your "on-screen" master-piece! Be SURE to hit ALL lines, BEFORE you remove the waxpaper copy from your "original."

Next, load TI-ARTIST and put a "frame" around the drawing screen, which helps to align the copy vertically, and can be erased later. Be SURE the copy lies WITHIN this frame, THEN tape it to your screen.



THIS PART IS MOST IMPORTANT! Find a comfortable position, "head-on" to the screen, and begin to "outline" the copy, by placing "DOTS" BEHIND the waxpaper lines. (See sample) DO NOT shift your head sideways! That causes DISTORTION and is HARD to repair later!

AGAIN, the same words of CAUTION apply when placing the dots as when you were making your WAXPAPER tracing, which is: TAKE YOUR TIME! Do NOT rush to finish it fast! CAREFULLY place each dot, as CLOSE to the "center" of each line, as possible! Although this will SEEM like a long, TEDIOUS job to you (and it IS) try to think of it as "building a strong foundation."

There is NO WAY you can follow a "traced" line by just pushing your joystick and mashing the fire-button! You'll see the cursor "weave all over the road" like a drunk driver! Before trying to make your first WAXPAPER R.L.E., plan to spend several hours with it. Be patient! Persevere! Your determination and care WILL be rewarded with a real work of art! (AMEN!)

It gets easier now as you play "connect the dots." You may find the ZOOM feature a real help with this. Another tip: SAVE the picture frequently! If you make a major boo-boo, you won't lose a TOO much time and sweat by simply reloading the SAVED picture, rather than struggling to repair it.

The FINAL STEP is to give your picture a good "polishing," OR what I had referred to earlier as "correcting time." If you took the time to do all the first steps PROPERLY and your picture is now "connected" simply view "THE BIG PICTURE" and all the "rough spots" will LEAP RIGHT OUT at you!! Adding or erasing a single pixel here and there, is all that remains. It sounds simple, doesn't it? (THIS is the HARDEST part!) After you've done all the "correcting" you THINK you can find, SAVE it, then store it away someplace (for a week or two) THEN reload it and compare your picture to the original. If you can't find ANYTHING else wrong with it, it is DONE! (Use MAX-RLE to convert your TI-ARTIST "PICTURE_P" file into a MAX-RLE.)

Some last tips: DON'T strive for ABSOLUTE PERFECTION! That's IMPOSSIBLE! (Garfield's "stripes" nearly ran me up a wall!!) BUT, by the same token, if you've waited those two weeks and you spot another "flaw," DO attempt fixing it! IF (due to limitations inherent in our consoles or TI-ARTIST, OR due to approaching blindness) you CAN'T fix it (after trying for five or six years) make up some "logical sounding" excuse, when you debut the master-piece. If you make it "high-tech" enough, ANYBODY will buy it! MY winning line is: "Well, NOBODY can draw a PERFECT, curved zig-zag line!"

So, here it is! My COMPLETED work of art! It's NOT a 100% PERFECT copy of the original but what can you expect from a console with an overloaded framistan in it's quadilop?!

There are TONS of "copiable" pictures, for your "WAXPAPER R.L.E. DIGITIZER!" (Coloring books for children, atlases, magazines, calanders, etc.,) and if any 99'ERS out there, try doing some PLAYBOY stuff well, I'd appreciate a copy, (before I go totally blind!)

After ALL THAT WORK, it's time for some FUN! Here's a RIDDLE for all you sharp-eyed TI-RUNNER players. WHERE (in TI-RUNNER) do the initials "IBM" appear on screen? HERE'S A CLUE: Play the game up to Level 28, then look in the bricks, but don't look TOO CLOSELY, or you MIGHT miss them!) R.K.

August 1987 - Houston User's Group

FULL DUPLEX

John Behnke

Welcome To The Chicago

Area TI-99/4A Users Group Bulletin

Board System

Supporting 300 - 2400 Baud
- 24 Hours A Day -

You're caller # 56426
Todays Date: 02/24
Present Time: 12:01

Enter ID number (0 if nor
Enter your Password: ****

Well as you can see by now, I'm doing this column this month. Part of the reason is that Butch Goldstein, our beloved Sysop is recovering from a nervous breakdown due to the fact that I have once again been tinkering with the groups BBS. If you are reading this and have never used the group BBS (which stands for Bulletin Board System for those who don't already know), you should give it a call and see what it's all about. All you need is an RS232 Interface card, a Modem (stands for Modulate/Demodulate), and one of many terminal programs that are on the market. Well this article will explain to you the new features that have been put into the BBS.

When the group first put up the BBS, it was based on the currect technology that was available in that day and age. I speak as if we are talking about decades but because of the rapid advancement of things, about five years. We were proud to be the first TI Users group to set up an all TI system. It had advanced features such as a new 300 Baud Modem, two 360 sector disk drives, and ran in console basic with a Mini-Memory module. (You remember the MM Module- It had an enormous 4k of memory for machine language) Later in that same year, the group added downloading. When all was working perfectly, you could call up, leave a message or two, read some messages, and maybe transfer a short program to your computer. I wasn't around then and this information is what I have been able to gather from some of the original members of our group.

A year or two after that I made the decision to buy a modem and with this new Signalman Mark III 300 Baud modem, I found the group by calling the group BBS one day and Chatting with the new Sysop - Butch Goldstein. He had just taken over as the new sysop and wanted to make some changes to the BBS. Of particular importance was a small annoyance that drove people crazy. The ONLY terminal program available at that time was TI's TEII module. You could display graphics, sound, change screen colors, and talk. The group BBS at that time spoke "WELCOME TO THE CHICAGO TI USERS GROUP BBS" when you logged on and automatically changed your screen colors for you everytime you accessed a different section of the BBS. Well to make this long story a little shorter, I came over and began tinkering with the board. Our current BBS now features the following: 2400 Baud Modem, Uploads and Downloads, A Printer, 2.5 megabytes of storage space on (7) logical disk drives (3 DSDD Drives and 2 Horizon Ram Disks), 8 independant download sections, 4 message bases, 40 or 80 column support, and a number of new or improved features that I will begin to explain now.

When you first log onto the BBS you will be given the opening title screen and will be asked for your ID number. Each member of the BBS is issued a special number and a password. The group charges $1 to join the BBS (free for non-attending members) to help with the upkeep of the BBS (electric, phone line, disks, paper, and any new equipment that is added. If you don't have a ID number and password, you may still call the BBS but you will not have access to the extensive download sections or be able to use the private mail section. If you wish to join the BBS, send $1 to the address on the back of this newsletter. Be sure to include your name, address, home phone, and a 2-7 [illegible] is good for life.

cs (how
know if
then
ll tell
t person

you what time that person called, [illegible]
has done, and what baud rate they called at.

At this point (if you have any) the BBS will alert you if you have any Private mail in your mailbox. If you do, the BBS will allow you to read it at this time or if you wish, you may read it later. In either case, keep in mind that we cannot keep your mail forever and if you choose not to call the BBS for a great deal of time, your mail may be automatically erased to make room for others. The BBS should leave mail up for about two weeks depending on how active the BBS is.

If you are new to the BBS (under 50 calls), you will be shown the main menu at this time:

```
                Main Menu
-----------------------------------------
A-Add Message          C-Chat With Sysop
D-Download File        E-Erase A Message
F-Flash Message        G-Goodbye
H-Help Me Out          N-New User Stats
R-Read Messages        U-Upload A File
V-View User List       W-Write To Sysop
X-Current Time         ?-Display Menu
$-Hang Up Quick
-----------------------------------------

Minutes Left: 30
Press (?) For Menu
Enter Your Command:
```

Please note that I will be showing you what the BBS looks like in 40 columns. If you have a Geneve 9640 or a terminal that displays 80 columns, your screen will look slightly different.

A - This command allows you to leave a message in any of the four message bases. After selecting this command, your screen will read:

```
Leave Message Base

0. Exit
1. General                    6-45
2. Geneve                     1-10
3. MS-DOS                     1-10
4. Private E-Mail
```

Please note option 3 - MS-DOS. This is NOT an IBM BBS in any respect. The only reason the group supports MS-DOS based computers (in a small way) is as a service to the many members of our group who own both a TI and a MS-DOS based computer. This support does not take away from the TI section in any way and is only intended as a way of supporting the members who support us. This same reason is also behind the Geneve 9640 section. We have separated the message bases so that owner of a TI will not have to read MS-DOS or Geneve messages. Nuff said!

After selecting the message base you wish to leave your message in, you will be asked To: (who this message is for) and Subject: (what the message is about). You will then be able to enter a 20 line, 80 column message. Hey! I only have 40 columns. Don't worry, just enter 40 column lines then or just type two 40 column lines. When you are finished, press the ENTER key on a blank line and you will be give a menu that will allow you to abort the message, edit it, save it, or list it out. Select the S command to save the message when you are done.

C - Chat allows you to page the Sysop (in this case Butch or anyone that's home at the BBS headquarters) Don't be afraid to use this command but then again don't abuse it either. If you are having programs of some sort, see if the sysop can help.

D - This section gives you the download section:

```
        Download Section Menu

    1. Information Files
    2. Geneve Utilities
    3. Geneve System Files
    4. Geneve Graphics
    5. TI-99/4A Entertainment
    6. TI-99/4A Utilities
    7. TI-99/4A Misc. Files
    8. MS-DOS Files

Menu(s), N)ew Files, or E)xit:
```

At this prompt, type in the download section or sections that you wish to view. If you want to view section 1, press 1 and ENTER. If you want to view all the TI sections, enter 567 and ENTER. You will then be given the following:

```
###  Filename  Len   File Type  ID Date
--- ---------- --- ----------- -- -----
  1 FILEONE     34  PROGRAM      0 02/10
 This is description of file one.
  2 FILETWO    100  INT/FIX 128  5 01/20
 This is description of file two.
  3 FILETHREE 8 DIS/VAR  80 12 02/14
 This is description of file three.
```

(this will continue until all files are shown. You can hit P to pause the display at any time)

```
T)ransfer, L)ist, or E)xit:T  (hit T to transfer)
File to download, A to Abort:FILEONE
```

Note: you may enter the filename or the file number.

Enter

```
1 for TEII
2 for X-Modem (Checksum)
3 for Menu
4 for View File
5 for Xon Xoff
```

At this point, select the transfer method that your terminal program uses. If you want to read a text file that has been uploaded as a DIS/VAR 80 file format, you may use option 4 to do so. Also, option 5 is used to read Non-TI type text file uploads. If a file is uploaded and is shown to be of Non-TI format, use this option (5) to read it.

Going back to the download section. Option N will display the 10 most recent uploads and what section they are in.

E - Allows to erase a message that YOU left. Be prepared to enter the message number.

F - Displays the flash message again in case you missed it or you really get into reading flash messages.

G - Logs you off the BBS. It also allows you to leave the Sysop a message and to leave a logoff message. A logoff message is a message that you leave that will be displayed to all other users of the BBS at logon. The message stays until another user leaves one. This is useful for anouncements and such.

H - The help section. General information for new users.

N - Allows you to retype your name, enter a new password, and tell the BBS if you have a 40 or 80 column display.

Q - Same as G, logs you off BBS.

R - Allows you to read messages from the four message bases. Enter message base you wish to read (see information on the A command) and the following will appear:

```
ENTER = Message 1
E)xit, C)ommands
Enter Message number:
```

If you press enter at this point, you will read message number 1, otherwise, enter the message number you wish to read or enter a special commad. Here's a list of the special commands that the BBS supports:

A-Aborts current message. (enter while reading message)
T-Title scan. Displays only message titles.
N-Next message. Like the A command but skips to the next message when you are in scroll mode.
I-Inverse read. Reverses the direction in which you are reading the messages.
S-Scroll toggle. Toggles between scroll mode and regular mode. Scroll displays messages continuously without stopping.
P-Pauses message display.
R-Reply. Allows you to reply to the last message you read. This reply will be automatically addressed to that person and the same subject will be used.
M-Message Slow. If you have a 1200 or 2400 baud modem, the message may be displayed to fast to read. Use this command to slow down the message display.

Use E to exit from the message base when you are finished reading message.

U - Upload a file. Allows you to upload a file to the BBS. If you have a new, original, or neat program or file, why not upload it to the BBS and share it with others. This command is VERY easy to use. All you have to do is answer a few short questions as to what type of file you are uploading, type the name of that file (2-10 characters please. Use uppercase and no periods. The following methods are currently being used to show others what type of file you uploaded. Please add these the the end of your filename (you will be limited to 6 characters) and the designator:

filename/ARC - File is archived
filename/ARQ - File is squeezed
filename/TXT - File is text

ARC and ARQ are files that were prepared with special programs before uploading. These programs merge several files into one and optionally (ARQ) squeeze them to save space. These files cannot be run when downloaded until they are unachived or unsqueezed.

IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THESE CONVENTIONS, DON'T USE THEM. IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM, LEAVE A MESSAGE ON THE BBS OR ASK SOMEONE AT THE MEETING.

The BBS will now ask you want type of transfer method you wish to use. The BBS supports TEII and X-Modem. Select the method your terminal program supports.

W - Write to Sysop. If you can't get ahold of the sysop with the C command, leave him a private message with this command.

X - Shows the system time. I say system because we are using a software clock that is often not even close to the actual time.

$ - Allows a quick logoff without the logoff questions. If you logoff this way, you may enter $ and then hang up.

Wow! That's the end of the command list. I hope that this helps some of you new users out there. Currently there are 4 sysops for the BBS.

Butch Goldstein - Number one Sysop with special qualities that one needs to have a BBS located at their home. He is the one to talk to about new passwords, and any gripes about the BBS.

Carole Goldstein - Not really a Sysop but happens to be married to Butch and thus lives at the BBS locale. Her functions include typing the word "RUN" when the BBS crashes for she cares not why it crashed. She also tells Butch (when she feels like it) that the board went down which gives Butch headaches and leads to convulsions which drive him insane.

(THIS IS THE REASON FOR THE FOLLOWING SYSOPS)

John Behnke (ME) - Gets called at all hours by Butch screaming "The BBS don't work!" and "Fix the !@#$% thing!" If I don't, Butch will put up an old version of the BBS (which still won't work but he doesn't care)

(IF I'M NOT HOME- THIS IS THE REASON FOR THE NEXT SYSOP)

Nick Iacovelli - He wrote the assembly for the BBS and is the only one besides myself that has the faintest idea as to how it works (considering that he writes jibberish code like me and can only spell computer words correctly)

(LAST BUT NOT LEAST)

Don Jones - Latest person abducted into the ranks. He's in charge of the Geneve section. Is being driven insane due to the fact that he keeps uploading 300+ sector programs to the BBS, only to have something happen and they get erased!

Well that's all for now - Thank God! I'll leave you in peace to ponder this mess I've left with you. Oh, in case you don't already know. The phone number for the BBS is:

312-966-2342
MS-DOS Users - Even Parity, 7 Data Bits
TI Users - No Parity, 8 Data Bits
300,1200,2400 Bauds, 24 hours a day.

TRADING TIMES

Steve Fuller has the following items for sale: two TI 99/4A consoles, PEB, 32K, RS232, 1-SSSD drive, accoustic modem 300baud and various software including Extended Basic, Multiplan, Ti Writer, Editor Assembler and more. You can reach Steve in N.Y. at 516-679-1182. $400 or best offer takes this one.

More or less locally, Wayne Revolt 4647 Farmington Ave in Richton Park, Il 60471 has a cassette based system to sell. He has a console w/dust cover, PEB, Speech, TI Joysticks, Micropal Extended Basic, Cassette recorder, cables, LOGO II, MB Exp system with baseball, space bandits and sewermania, TEII, 20 different games and more. You can reach him after 6:00 at (312)481-4646. Make him an offer.

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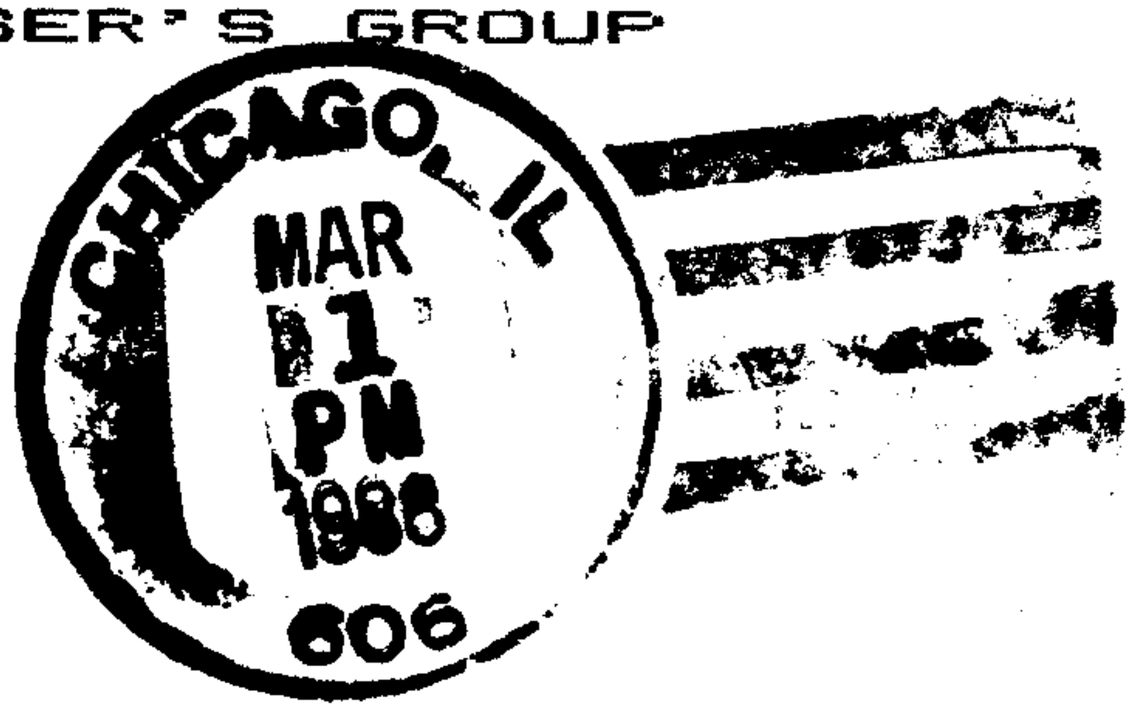

REMarks

A lot of readers have told me that they have been waiting for me to say something nice about the Geneve before they would consider purchasing it. Well, this may just be the issue that turns it around. I have received the GPL version .99 which seems to correct most of the problems I was having. I am still disappointed that most of my software including TI Artist does not run properly but we are starting to see some very impressive software for the Geneve itself and the hardware finally seems to be working the way it should. Maybe if Myarc had put the machine out as it is now instead of as it was then they would have more followers praising instead of condemming.

Also last month, I received a personal call from Jack Riley. I'm still not sure if he was oiling the squeaky wheel or was genuinely involved in seeing that my problems were solved. Either way, the personal attention is very much appreciated, and there will be more elsewhere in this issue outlining our conversation.

Also last month I added a color monitor to my system. It is the Magnavox 8CM515. I ordered it from an outlet called Peripherals Direct in Northbrook, Il. The reason I chose this monitor was because it had both the TTL RGB input that the IBM needs and the analog RGB input that is so important to the Geneve and because the price was right. My feelings are that Myarc should strongly suggest the addition of an Analog RGB monitor when a Geneve is purchased. The difference is incredible.

Color was one of the things that I lost going from the 99/4A to the 9640 and it was very much missed. The capabilities of the Geneve with the graphic format GIF and My-Art are really worth seeing. We will have a demonstration of these pictures at an upcoming meeting.

So finally, I seem to have no 9640 related problems putting this issue together except for the inability to run the TI Artist formatted titles. The TI world just keeps on getting better.

See you at the meeting.